

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915(e)(2)(B), the Court must dismiss a complaint filed in forma pauperis if the action is frivolous, malicious, fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, or seeks monetary relief from a defendant who is immune from such relief. An action is frivolous if it “lacks an arguable basis in either law or fact.” Neitzke v. Williams, 490 U.S. 319, 328 (1989); Denton v. Hernandez, 504 U.S. 25, 31 (1992). An action is malicious if it is undertaken for the purpose of harassing the named defendants and not for the purpose of vindicating a cognizable right. Spencer v. Rhodes, 656 F. Supp. 458, 461-63 (E.D.N.C. 1987), *aff’d* 826 F.2d 1059

(4th Cir. 1987). A complaint fails to state a claim if it does not plead “enough facts to state a claim to relief that is plausible on its face.” Bell Atlantic Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 570 (2007).

Plaintiff brings this action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 for alleged medical mistreatment. Named as defendants are the St. Francois County Jail, Unknown Ramsey, Darren Cook, Rodney Harris, K. Glore, Richard Ett, and Unknown Dear.

Plaintiff alleges that he was denied several medications during his detention at the St. Francois County Jail (the “Jail”). Plaintiff asserts that defendant Harris, a nurse, sometimes denies him “life sustaining medications.” Plaintiff also asserts that Unknown Ramsey was aware of his list of required medications. The complaint contains no further allegations against any of the named defendants.

Plaintiff’s claim against the Jail is legally frivolous because the Jail is not a suable entity. Ketchum v. City of West Memphis, Ark., 974 F.2d 81, 81 (8th Cir. 1992) (departments or subdivisions of local government are “not juridical entities suable as such.”); Catlett v. Jefferson County, 299 F. Supp. 2d 967, 968-69 (E.D. Mo. 2004) (same).

The complaint is silent as to whether defendants are being sued in their official or individual capacities. Where a “complaint is silent about the capacity in which [plaintiff] is suing defendant, [a district court must] interpret the complaint as

including only official-capacity claims.” Egerdahl v. Hibbing Community College, 72 F.3d 615, 619 (8th Cir. 1995); Nix v. Norman, 879 F.2d 429, 431 (8th Cir. 1989). Naming a government official in his or her official capacity is the equivalent of naming the government entity that employs the official. Will v. Michigan Dep’t of State Police, 491 U.S. 58, 71 (1989). To state a claim against a municipality or a government official in his or her official capacity, plaintiff must allege that a policy or custom of the government entity is responsible for the alleged constitutional violation. Monell v. Dep’t of Social Services, 436 U.S. 658, 690-91 (1978). The instant complaint does not contain any allegations that a policy or custom of a government entity was responsible for the alleged violations of plaintiff’s constitutional rights. As a result, the complaint fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted as to the individual defendants.

“Liability under § 1983 requires a causal link to, and direct responsibility for, the alleged deprivation of rights.” Madewell v. Roberts, 909 F.2d 1203, 1208 (8th Cir. 1990); see also Martin v. Sargent, 780 F.2d 1334, 1338 (8th Cir. 1985) (claim not cognizable under § 1983 where plaintiff fails to allege that defendant was personally involved in or directly responsible for the incidents that injured plaintiff); Boyd v. Knox, 47 F.3d 966, 968 (8th Cir. 1995) (respondeat superior theory inapplicable in § 1983 suits). In the instant action, plaintiff has not set forth any facts indicating that

defendants Ramsey, Cook, Glore, Ett, or Dear were directly involved in or personally responsible for the alleged violations of his constitutional rights. As a result, the complaint fails to state a claim upon which relief can be granted for this reason as well.


Finally, I previously ordered plaintiff to pay an initial partial filing fee of \$3.33 no later than July 20, 2011. Plaintiff has failed to pay the fee, and therefore, he has failed to prosecute this case. As a result, this action will also be dismissed under Rule 41(b) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

Accordingly,

**IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that this action is **DISMISSED** without prejudice.

**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED** that plaintiff's motion to appoint counsel [Doc. 4] is **DENIED** as moot.

Dated this 2nd day of August, 2011.

  
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CATHERINE D. PERRY  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE